

Afghanistan: Rhetoric vs. Reality

Rhetoric:

We have joined with the Afghan people to bring down the Taliban regime—the protectors of the al-Qaeda network—and aided a new, democratic government to rise in its place.

National Security Strategy of the United States,
March 16, 2006

Reality:

THEN

Number of Taliban attacks from
2001–2003: 22

Number of suicide attacks from
2001–2004: 9

Goal for number of NATO & US
trained soldiers in Afghan army:
70,000

Hectares in Afghanistan devoted to
poppy cultivation in 1999: 51,500

NOW

Number of Taliban attacks from
2004–2006: 284

Number of suicide attacks from
2005–2006: 64

Number of trained soldiers in the
Afghan Army: About 26,900

Hectares in Afghanistan devoted to
poppy cultivation in 2005: 107,000

Estimated opium produced from
Afghanistan's crops: 4,475 metric
tons

Percent of global opiate supply
originating in Afghanistan: 90%